

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Veterans

How does the VA Mission Act change my health information sharing in VA?

This law removes these restrictions and ensures that community providers have access to appropriate health information for Veterans and brings VA in line with other health-care providers and federal standards related to the exchange of health information.

What does the VA Mission Act do with my VA health information ?

Veterans will experience improved continuity and quality of care because community providers will have access to necessary medical records. Community providers will now have access to all health information for Veterans for treatment purposes.

What is Section 132 and how does it affect me as a Veteran?

Previously, VA had restrictions different from other health-care providers regarding the exchange of Veterans' health information. This law removes those restrictions and ensures that community providers have access to appropriate health information for Veterans, and brings VA in line with other health providers and federal standards related to the exchange of health information.

What are the benefits of sharing your health care information ?

VHIE shares the right information at the right time with your providers in order to help Veterans and their health care team make the best decisions about your health. This instant exchange of information can dramatically improve patient safety, especially during emergency situations, and overall improve coordination and continuity of care for Veterans who seek care in the community.

How can Veterans participate in VHIE?

All Veterans who have not previously signed form 10-0484 as of September 30, 2019 will be automatically enrolled, but have the option to opt out. Beginning late 2019, a VA patient's information will be shared with any community providers that also provide health care services for the shared patient.

How does a Veteran choose not to share his or her health information?

Should a Veteran decide not to share his or her health information with community providers, download, sign, and submit VA Form 10-10164 Opt-Out of Sharing Form to their local Release of Information (ROI) Office in person or by mail. This request stops sharing with all Health Information Exchanges and will remain in effect until revoked or replaced.

This process prevents VA from sharing a Veteran's VA medical information. It does not opt Veterans out of any community Health care programs. State law helps guide community care providers regarding HIE program participation. Please contact participating community care providers to learn how to opt in or out of their HIE process.

[What if a Veteran changes his or her mind?](#)

If a Veteran decided not to share his or her health information and then change his or her mind, he or she can authorize VA to share his or her medical record with community providers by downloading, completing, and submit VA Form 10-10163 to their local Release of Information (ROI) Office in person or by mail.

[What is the Veterans Health Information Exchange \(VHIE\) Program?](#)

VHIE is a secure network that connects medical records from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), other federal, and community care partners. VHIE provides VA and community care providers secure access to certain parts of your electronic health record, which eliminates the need for Veterans and their families to carry paper medical records from one health care provider to another.

With VHIE, all your participating providers can access your records and health information electronically. To participate, all providers must meet stringent security requirements and join the [eHealth Exchange](#), a network of doctors who securely share clinical information across the United States.

VA Providers and Staff

VA and participating VHIE community care providers have access to complete and accurate information about their shared Veteran patients. VHIE shares the right information at the right time with providers to improve patient safety, coordination of care, and continuity of care for our Veterans.

[What is the electronic health information exchange?](#)

Electronic Health Information Exchange (HIE) allows participating health care providers from different health care delivery organizations to appropriately access and securely share patient health care information. This exchange is guided by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations. Using HIE, health care information, which is digital in nature, can follow patients whenever and wherever it is needed. HIE makes it possible for the various and disparate providers involved in patient care to access the same information.

How is the information from community care providers made available?

VHIE uses the eHealth Exchange, a public-private partnership administered by the Sequoia Project, to securely receive health information from and share health information with participating community care provider.

Is this exchange of health information safe and secure?

Rest assured. Your health information is safe and secure as it moves from VA to participating community care providers.

What about Veteran privacy rights?

VA is committed to protecting Veteran privacy. VHIE uses secure technologies for information sharing between VA and participating community health providers. Only community health care providers and organizations that have partnership agreements with VA and are part of VA's approved, trusted network may receive VA health information.

What hospital or systems are participating in this program?

A listing of participating community care providers is located at <https://www.va.gov/VLER/vler-health-your-area.asp>. VA continues to add other providers as the program expands in pursuit of nationwide interoperability to enable the best care for our Veterans.

Will all VA medical facilities use electronic health information sharing?

Yes, Directive 6371 mandates that all VA medical facilities use electronic health information sharing.

Who can see Veterans' information?

VA providers and VHIE's [participating community care providers](#) may see a shared Veteran's health information. The list of participating community care partners is growing each month.